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BILL FLETCHER

SYSTEMS THINKER • STRATEGIST • CREATIVE

January 22, 2002

Renata Hesse, Trial Attorney
 Antitrust Division
 Department of Justice
 600 D Street NW, Suite 1200
 Washington, DC 20530

Fax 202-616-9937
microsoft.atr@justice.gov

Dear Ms. Hesse:

I am the parent of three children, have run my own business for most of the past two decades, and am in my third four-year term on the Wake County Board of Education. So I come to my conclusions from a variety of viewpoints.

I believe Microsoft has put a fair offer on the table in their effort to bring to closure the action initiated by the Clinton Justice Department.

1. For the public schools, Microsoft's settlement offer contains desperately needed hardware, software and training. There is significant inequality in our schools in terms of technology. Some characterize the emerging "digital divide" and a change from the "haves and have nots" to the "knows and the know nots." The Microsoft proposal puts essential technology in the hands of our deserving students immediately. And none too soon!
2. For my business, Microsoft continues to provide high value, cost effective products and services, even with significant resources drained away by frivolous lawsuits.
3. For my family, prices of quality hardware and software continue to decline so that we have been able to provide appropriate educational tools for our college-bound children.

From the beginning, the federal government's pursuit of Microsoft has been politically inspired and economically unwise. The case was conceived and even subsidized in the beginning by Microsoft's competitors. They sought to win in the courts what they could not win in the market. The government should never have initiated this proceeding.

Now the courts have an opportunity to end this madness. Three years and \$30 million of the taxpayers' money is enough. At a time when terrorists threaten America and we are facing an economic slowdown, our nation, the information technology industry and Microsoft should not be forced to waste more time and money on this case.

It is time to move ahead. Please accept the Microsoft offer and let's refocus our government's resources on more important issues.

Sincerely,



Bill Fletcher

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